Declaration of Positra Port as SEZ

4144. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Positra Port has been declared as SEZ;

(b) whether any environmental clearance has been obtained;

(c) whether the Ministry of Commerce and Industry had been contacted for such clearance before declaring SEZ;

(d) if not, what action has been taken so far; and

(e) what are the other proposals from Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (d) In principle approval has been given for setting up of a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) at Positra near Dwarka in Gujarat. The approval is subject to the condition that the promoters of the Zone would get all necessary clearances, including clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, which is yet to be obtained by them.

(e) No other proposal for setting up of SEZ in Gujarat has been received. However existing Export Processing Zones at Kandla and Surat in Gujarat have been converted into Special Economic Zones on 1.11.2000.

Decline in Export to Developed Countries

4145. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our exports to the developed countries including UK, Germany, Belgium, Japan and Switzerland have fallen during the year 1999-2000; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Exports to most of the major developed countries have

shown a positive growth in dollar terms in 1999-2000. As per the disaggregate data from Directorate of General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI & S), Calcutta, the details of exports during the period 1999-2000 and the corresponding period last year for some important developed countries are as follows:—

US Dollar Million

	1998-99	1999-2000	% Growth
U.K.	1855.40	2246.62	21.0
Germany	1852.00	1802.27	(-) 2.6
Belgium	1287.88	1380.94	7.2
Japan	1651.87	1702.91	3.1
Switzerland	319.06	376.27	17.9
United States	7199.64	8533.88	18.53
West Europe	9527.36	10415.29	9.3

Export promotion being a constant endeavor of the Government, a number of steps have been taken to further enhance the export growth which include reduction in transaction costs through decentralisation, simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy. Steps have also been taken to promote exports through multilateral and bilateral initiatives, identification of thrust sectors and focus regions. Special Economic Zones are being set up to further boost the exports.

Preferential trade agreement with Columbia

4146. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a preferential trade agreement has recently been entered into with Columbia, the first ever with any Latin American country to boost bilateral trade and commerce;

(b) if so, by when a strong institutional mechanism would be set up for providing strategic interventions and monitoring on a regular basis and develop action plans for establishing mutual contacts; and